Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TOKYO 12977 271101Z

47
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

OMB-01 (ISO) W
---------- 020740
R 270912Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1900
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JAPAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12977

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, JA
SUBJ: THE LDP LEADERSHIP CRISIS: WHY THE OUTCOME REMAINS OBSCURE

REF: TOKYO 12897

1. JAPANESE POLITICS, TO BEGIN WITH SUI GENERIS AMONG PARLIA-
MENTARY SYSTEMS, HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE UNPREDICTABLE. BUT IF THE
CRYSTAL BALL IS CLOUDED OVER FOR OLD-HAND OBSERVERS, WE HAVE
FOUND SOME SMALL COMFORT IN THE EXTENSIVE SOUNDINGS WE HAVE
TAKEN OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS WITH SOME OF OUR BEST SOURCES, IN-
CLUDING PRINCIPALS INVOLVED IN THE KEY LDP MEETINGS. THEY ARE
EQUALLY UNSURE AS TO WHERE THE PARTY IS HEADED OR WHEN THE DEN-
OUEMENT WILL COME.

2. LOGIC DOES NOT HELP. LOGICALLY THERE IS NO OBVIOUS REASON TO
OUST MIKI AT THIS PARTICULAR JUNCTURE, WHEN HE IS APPARENTLY
ACCOMPLISHING WHAT HE PLEDGED HIMSELF TO DO -- AND THE PUBLIC
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TOKYO 12977 271101Z

WANTS HIM TO DO: BRING THE LOCKHEED INVESTIGATION TO A SUCCESS-

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

FUL CONCLUSION AND CONVENE AN EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION TO PASS WHAT ALL OBJECTIVE OBSERVERS ARE AGREED ARE IMPORTANT PIECES OF BUDGET-RELATED LEGISLATION. ALWAYS, IN THE PAST, PRIME MINISTERS HAVE HAD CLEAR REASON, READILY GRASPED BY THE PUBLIC, FOR STEPPING DOWN, IF ONLY TO "TAKE RESPONSIBILITY" FOR UNPLEASANT DEVELOPMENTS. THE THINLY VEILED DISPLEASURE OF THE ANTI-MIKI FORCES, HOWEVER, IS BASED ON RESENTMENT THAT HE IS PRIME MINISTER BY ACCIDENT, I.E. SELECTED TO BREAK AN IMPASSE TWENTY MONTHS AGO, WHO FAILS TO RECOGNIZE HE WAS MEANT TO SERVE ONLY BRIEFLY AND CLINGS TO POWER; THAT HE REALLY WAS NEVER "ONE OF THE (TRUE CONSERVATIVE) CROWD"; AND THAT HE SIMPLY DOES NOT PLAY THE TRADITIONAL CONSERVATIVE GAME, DEFERRING TO BUSINESS, AND PRESERVING LDP ELECTION ADVANTAGE. WHY HAS HE FAILED TO STOP THE LOCKHEED INVESTIGATION, WHEN IT WAS PATENTLY NECESSARY TO MINIMIZE SCANDAL-RELATED DAMAGE TO PARTY IMAGE AND MEMBERS?

3. THESE ARE, HOWEVER, HARDLY ARGUMENTS WITH WHICH THE ANTI-MIKI FORCES CAN APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE -- WHICH IS A MAJOR REASON WHY THEY HAVE NOT YET PUSHED BRINKMANSHIP ALL THE WAY TO THE BRINK. WHAT THE ANIT-MIKI FACTIONS, NOW AN OVERSHELMING LDP MAJORITY IN THE DIET AND CABINET, WANT IS FOR MIKI TO "SEE THE LIGHT," I.E., ACCEPT THE FACT THAT MOST CONSERVATIVES WILL NO LONGER BE LEAD BY HIM, AND STEP DOWN GRACEFULLY, IN WHICH CASE THEY ARE FULLY PREPARED TO GIVE HIM CONSIDERABLE LATITUDE IN NEGOTIATING THE TERMS OF AN HONORABLE EXIT.

4. PRECEDENT DOES NOT HELP MUCH. BY ALL THAT IS CUSTOMARY IN JAPANESE POST-WAR POLITICAL PRACTICE, MIKI SHOULD PLAY THE GAME AND MAKE THE BEST DEAL IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THAT, HOWEVER, IS TRADITIONAL POLITICS, AND MIKI SEES HIMSELF AS A NEW STYLE POLITICIAN, A LEADER WHO WILL NOT BE FORCED OUT WITHOUT "JUST" CAUSE THROUGH NAKED FACTIONAL MANEUVERING OF THOSE WITH SOMETHING TO HIDE OR SOMETHING TO GAIN. IGNORING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS ACCESSION TO THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP, HE BELIEVES HE IS RESPONSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE, NOT JUST HIS PARTY -- AND INDEED HE IS ABLE TO POINT TO MEDIA SUPPORT AND A DEGREE OF OPINION-POLL POPULARITY THAT IS UNPRECEDENTED FOR WHAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE A PRIME MINISTER'S FINAL DAYS IN OFFICE.

5.SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE. THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO WAY THAT CONFIDENTIAL

MIKI'S OPPONENTS CAN THROW HIM OUT OF OFFICE IF HE IS DETERMINED TO REMAIN AT LEAST THROUGH ELECTIONS. A NON-CONFIDENCE MOTION, ONCE THE DIET IS CONVENED, OR ANY OF THE OBSTRUCTIONIST MANEUVERS THAT ONE USUALLY REGARDS AS COMING FROM THE TACTICAL HANDBOOK OF THE LEFT WOULD PUT THE ANTI-MIKI FORCES IN THE LDP IN THE POSITION OF JOINING WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTIES WITHOUT ANY OSTENSIBLE SUBSTANTIVE JUSTIFICATION. MOREOVER, MIKI COULD CALL FOR ELECTIONS EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER THE DIET CONVENED. THE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

MOST POTENT WEAPON OF THE ANTI-MIKI FACTIONS WOULD BE THE THREAT OF MASS CABINET RESIGNATION. WHILE MIKI WOULD HAVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL PREROGATIVE TO REPLACE THE RESIGNED MINISTERS, HE WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE WILLING TO GO QUITE THIS FAR, IF ONLY BECAUSE OF THE HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE PRECEDENT IF WOULD CREATE. BUT AT THIS POINT THERE IS NO GOOD REASON FOR CABINET MEMBERS TO RESIGN.

6. MIKI COULD ALSO CONCEIVABLY BOLT THE PARTY, AND WHILE THIS POSSIBILITY IS NOT ENTIRELY DISCOUNTED SHOULD TEMPERS RISE, IT IS NOT CONSIDERED TOO PLAUSIBLE A THREAT, LARGELY BECAUSE IT IS HARD TO SEE WHERE IT WOULD GET MIKI. HIS CRITICS BELIEVE HE WOULD LIKE TO BE THE CATALYST FOR THE EVOLUTION OF A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM FOR JAPAN, BUT THE GULF BETWEEN THE CONSTITUENCIES OF MIKI FACTION MEMBERS AND THOSE OF THE DISPARATE OPPOSITION PARTIES REMAINS FAR TOO WIDE FOR SUCH A GAMBIT TO SUCCEED FOR SOME TIME TO COME. EVEN IF IT DID, THE NUMBERS INVOLVED WOULD MAKE IT ONLY A LARGISH OPPOSITION PARTY, FORCED TO ALLY ITSELF WITH OTHERS TO OBTAIN POWER. MIKI'S PRIMARY LEVERAGE, ACCORDINGLY, IS TO SIT TIGHT.

7. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE CANNOT PREDICT. THERE IS, OF COURSE, AN ULTIMATE DEADLINE OF REQUIRED ELECTIONS BY YEAR-END. IN THE INTERIM THE RIVAL LDP LEADERS MAY CONCLUDE THAT TO CONTINUE TO "JAW-JAW" IS PREFERABLE TO "WAR-WAR." OR MIKI MIGHT ABANDON HIS HIGH-MINDED/AMBITIOUS DESIRE TO STAY ON AND NEGOTIATE A GRACEFUL EXIT. OR -- JUDGING FROM STERLING PERFORMANCE TO DATE, AN UNLIKELY POSSIBILITY -- SHEER BONE-WEARINESS OR TOO MANY INEPT REMARKS MIGHT PRECIPITATE AN ILLOGICAL, UNPRECEDENTED STEP SUCH AS AN IMMEDIATE CALL FOR ELECTIONS OR A CABINET RESIGNATION. OR, AS WE HAVE OFTEN SAID, SHOULD LOCKHEED STRIKE CLOSER TO CAESAR, THE CURRENT GAME MIGHT END ABRUPTLY.
SHOESMITH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO12977
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760327-1221
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760810/aaaaaioe.tel
Line Count: 146
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TOKYO 12897
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE LDP LEADERSHIP CRISIS: WHY THE OUTCOME REMAINS OBSCURE
TAGS: PINT, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006